

THE Bloomfield Record

A WEEKLY JOURNAL
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The Bloomfield City Election Proceedings.

A decision was rendered in the Court of Appeals at Trenton, on Wednesday, by Justice Magie, that ends the ridiculous attempt to create a city of Bloomfield including there in the Borough of Glen Ridge.

The gist of the decision is that "the proceedings to incorporate the city of Bloomfield were fundamentally wrong, because the district described in the petition included territory within the limits of the Borough of Glen Ridge."

"In my judgment," says Justice Magie, "the legislative intent was that the district, the inhabitants of which might become incorporated under this act, should not include territory within the limits of any municipal corporation higher than that of a township. 'Town' as used in the act, must be construed as including all such corporations ranging between cities and townships."

When the attempt was made under the third class city law, in June 1895, to create this city, The Record opposed it and exposed it, in the interest of the people of Bloomfield township as well as of the Borough of Glen Ridge. In an editorial article entitled "Buncoing the People," The Record said:

The entire attack now made upon Glen Ridge depends upon the *misinterpretation* of this law by applying it to incorporated municipalities. In its first section it is clearly provided that the district is not to include "any territory already within the limits of any incorporated city or town." Glen Ridge is now an incorporated town, possessing and exercising all the rights of self-government conferred by the borough laws of New Jersey. In this State there are a few town-municipalities, and many more borough-municipalities, the chief difference being that a borough has a mayor while the town has a president as its head. A borough as defined by Webster is "an incorporated town, smaller than a city."

Glen Ridge as it stands today is stronger in its legality of incorporation than Montclair as a town under the Short Law. As a borough it has withstood legal assault in the highest State Court. It therefore cannot be disturbed or invalidated, nor will it be affected by the election to be held on Bloomfield territory on the 6th of next August. Bloomfield is affected, and will be a loser pecuniarily, to the amount of the considerable cost of petitions, affidavits, lawyer fees, election expenses, etc., to be incurred without rational hope of subjugating Glen Ridge.

The people of Glen Ridge are practically a unit for their borough independence, but if every voter were in favor of incorporation with Bloomfield, it could not be accomplished by this law, which can legally be applied only to unincorporated township territory.

No lawyer was consulted, nor anybody else, nor was anything charged for the "opinion" expressed above. We got our pay in abuse for advice that if followed would have saved the taxpayers some thousands of dollars spent in worse than useless litigation.

Barabbas Turned Loose.

The following item from the Journal of Commerce of Nov. 9th corroborates statements made before the election regarding the shrewd methods of intimidation employed to defeat Mr. Bryan. Italics ours:

"The 'Iron Age' reports a sale of 8,000 tons of billets to an Eastern wire mill and the giving of several orders that were offered before the election conditioned on Mr. Bryan's defeat."

There in a single paragraph is the admission of a conspiracy against the freedom of the ballot that strikes directly at the root of the American tree of liberty.

The evidence is conclusive, and accumulating, that Mr. Bryan's defeat was due to the power of corporations exerted in such an irresistible manner as to intimidate and prejudice voters by thousands and tens of thousands.

The campaign as it was run and as it has ended, is epitomized in this vivid picture from a sermon entitled, "A Spiritual Election," a veritable masterpiece, preached in Brooklyn August 16, 1896, by President M. Woolsey Stryker of Hamilton College:

"Jerusalem sleeps this dark night; only a few waken as with lanterns, staves and brutal jestings that rabble group chatters in from the garden of olives with a prisoner in the midst. But at the Pretorium all is hurry; the elders are there to consummate the plottings hatched in their caucuses of a year past. The mob is accumulating—the rags and rascality of Jerusalem—while reputable citizenship turns its pillow and sleeps on. Influence is plying its wedges on the chilled steel, forcing Pilate, little by little, while he evades, prevaricates and tries all ways, excepting a soldier's and a man's, to avert the dilemma between injustice and unpopularity. * * * Caesar or Barabbas, pagan or seditious, anyone were better than Christ. This world despises minorities and measures truth by its bulk following; but an unrighteous majority, under whatever terms, is but a mob. The elders and priests played upon the multitude, incited them to ratify a deliberate party infamy. Barabbas was chosen by an overwhelming majority and by acclamation, and Jesus was lynched under the forms of law!"

BLOOMFIELD'S PARK.

Was the Land Purchased or was it Given?

The above is a question that has been answered "yes" and "no" from the earliest time down to the present. It creates a good-natured difference of opinion once again in the celebration of the Old Church Centennial, the historian of the church, Dr. Knox, having made some reference to the park ground in front of the church, in connection of the idea that the church had been built upon the park. The facts that should be maintained are that school lot, church lot and the lot that eventually became the open village green, were each of them distinct, though now there are no fences or posts dividing them. The deed of the school property is dated 1782, that of the church lot 1796, and of the "parading green" 1797. At that time and for years afterward the green was inclosed by a post and rail fence, and used as a pasture when not used for military evolutions. In time the fencing gave way to turned posts set to mark the boundaries of each property, and the old posts were replaced by new ones that stood like sentinels all about the public ground until Dr. H. W. Ballantine came here as pastor and citizen. He was leader in the transforming movement that gave us modern graded grounds and symmetrical walks about the church, making the park such in reality.

In regard to the purchase, or gift of the park originally, Dr. Knox, in his historical address on Sunday said that Deacon Davis gave a deed for the ground and received fifty dollars, with a list of uncollected subscriptions.

When this same subject came up in 1873, somebody hunted out the deed for the property, and the same was printed in The Record of Dec. 4th in that year. This deed, which had not been recorded, if not now in possession of the town, ought to be again hunted up and deposited with the Clerk for preservation. It is entitled: "A deed of trust from Joseph Davis to Samuel Ward, Joseph Woodruff, Nathaniel Crane and John Dodd, for the Bloomfield Parading Green." It was signed and sealed November 27th, 1797. The consideration mentioned was two hundred dollars, and the description of the land conveyed was as follows:

"Beginning at the northwest corner of the School-house lot on the east side of the road and from thence running along said road south nine degrees and five minutes west, twenty chains and twenty links, thence along said road south twenty-three degrees and thirty minutes east, four chains and sixty-three links, thence north eight degrees and forty minutes east, (about) twenty-two chains to the meeting house lot, thence north eighty-three degrees and forty-five minutes west, eighty-four links, to a corner of the meeting house lot, thence along the same north six degrees and thirty minutes east, to the said school house lot, thence along the same north eighty-three degrees and forty-five minutes west, one chain and forty-five links to the beginning, containing four acres and eighty-hundredths of an acre; to them the said Samuel Ward, Joseph Woodruff, Nathaniel Crane and John Dodd, and to their heirs forever, to be by them kept and held in trust for the use and purpose of a parading green in behalf of the people of Bloomfield," etc.

At the time this deed was published in these columns, Mr. Z. B. Dodd, a veteran of the War of 1812, was living. He had a distinct recollection of some facts relating to the purchase or proposed purchase of the Common. Mr. Dodd, in reply to a note from Mr. John Oakes, wrote as follows:

BLOOMFIELD, NOV. 18, 1873.

JOHN OAKES, ESQ., DEAR SIR:

I have a distinct recollection of hearing General Dodd speak about the Bloomfield Green (as it was then called) in connection with the subscription that had been circulated to raise funds to pay for the land. I cannot repeat the conversation, neither do I remember hearing any price named for the land. The impression left on my mind about the subscription was that it had cost a great deal of time and labor and yet the business was not finished, the money was not all collected, and that some of the uncollected subscriptions were turned over in part payment for the land.

Respectfully,

Z. B. DODD.

All of these documents and facts, taken together, show that veterans of the Revolutionary war undertook at a time when money was much harder to get than now to collect two hundred dollars for the purchase of a parading green. Whatever sum was actually raised or ultimately paid, is now of small account. We must give the Dodds, the Davises, and all, due credit for securing a spot of land to public use that has now become an invaluable and most attractive feature of Bloomfield.

Final Centenary Service.

Last Sunday morning's service at the First Presbyterian Church, concluding the Centenary celebration, was devoted to the historical sermon by Dr. Charles E. Knox. The very large attendance betokened the interest felt by outsiders as well as by the present members of the congregation, in the early history of the Old Church. It was necessary to resort to the expedient of placing extra seats in the aisles in order to accommodate the people.

The usual order of service was changed somewhat to provide time for the sermon. The pastor announced on opening the service that he had received a communication which proved

to be an interesting coincidence. The church at East Bloomfield, New York, being about to celebrate its centennial this coming week, sent greetings to the Old Church and quoted the first verse of the Ninetieth Psalm. The pastor said that with the permission of the congregation he would return in its name the first verse of the 12th chapter of Hebrews.

Another gratifying announcement was to the effect that a granddaughter of Rev. Cyrus Gildersleeve was present at the service. Her husband, the Rev. N. C. Parks, D. D., who accompanied her, from Pittston, Pa., occupied a seat on the platform. Dr. Parks read the Scripture lesson from the century-old Bible, which is one of the cherished belongings of the old church. Rev. George A. Paul offered the morning prayer.

Portraits in oil of Rev. Cyrus Gildersleeve and of Rev. Gideon N. Judd were placed at each side of the choir railing. Portraits of Dr. Ballantine, Dr. Sherwood, Dr. Duffield and Rev. E. Seymour were placed on the gallery fronts.

The sermon by Dr. Knox, although of considerable length, was listened to with untiring interest. It covered the Puritan settlement of this region, from 1666 to the building and occupancy of the church, and brief accounts of the pastors down to 1865. It was a most valuable contribution to the annals of the church, a labor of love on the part of the historian that was fully appreciated and enjoyed by the large congregation that heard it. Through the kindness of Dr. Knox we are enabled to transfer a considerable part of it to these pages for the advantage of those who were not permitted to hear it in its delivery.

Death of Horace Dodd.

After an illness of nearly three months, Horace Dodd died at his home, 446 Franklin street, Sunday morning, at the age of seventy-six years. Mr. Dodd was appointed in 1861 by President Lincoln as Postmaster, and served continuously until 1885, when President Cleveland appointed A. L. Brown. Deceased was widely known throughout the State, having been vice-president of the Essex County Mutual Insurance Company, a director in the Bloomfield Savings Institution, and for a number of years secretary and treasurer of the Bloomfield Cemetery Company. Years ago he served Bloomfield in the Board of Freeholders, and also in the Township Committee. He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church, and at one time served as trustee. Mr. Dodd was born and brought up in Bloomfield. On October 25 last, Mr. and Mrs. Dodd celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage. For many years he was engaged in the shoe business. A widow, four daughters and two sons, one of the latter being Lewis K. Dodd, cashier and a director in the Bloomfield National Bank, survive.

Funeral services were held on Wednesday afternoon, conducted by the Rev. James F. Lee, of the First Presbyterian Church. The pall bearers were life long friends of the deceased, Messrs. David W. Smith, Joseph K. Oakes, N. Harvey Dodd and John Sherman, of Bloomfield, Mark Ball, of Newark, and John Ennis of Orange.

At a meeting of the Finance Committee of the Bloomfield Saving Institution held November 16, 1896, the following was adopted:

Whereas, in the death of our friend and co-worker Mr. Horace Dodd, this institution has met with a loss which it will deeply feel, and

Whereas, we recall with pleasure the cordiality and kind-hearted simplicity of his manner and the honesty of his character which endeared him to us all.

Resolved, that while we bow submissively to the wisdom of our Heavenly Father, we deplore the death of our beloved and respected fellow member, and we desire to express to the family our sincere sympathy in their great bereavement.

Resolved, that these resolutions be spread upon our minutes and be published in the Bloomfield "Citizen" and "Record." Also that a copy be furnished to the family.

JOSEPH H. DODD,
Secretary.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Essex County Mutual Insurance Company held November 19, 1896, the following was adopted:

Whereas, God in his providence has called from our midst Mr. Horace Dodd, Vice President of the Company, an active and efficient officer, and

Whereas, Mr. Dodd has served for over thirty-seven consecutive years as a Director of the Company, being the only survivor of fifteen Directors who were elected in the year 1859.

Resolved, that while we bow to the will of the Supreme Ruler, we mourn the loss of one whose genial, cheerful presence won our hearts and whose wise counsels commanded our deep respect, and we desire to extend to the family our sincere sympathy in their hour of bereavement.

Resolved, that these resolutions be spread upon our minutes and published in the local papers. Also that a copy be furnished to the family.

JOSEPH H. DODD,
Secretary.

Rev. Mr. Aylsworth Receives a Call.

Rev. Robert M. Aylsworth, pastor of the Park M. E. Church, for the past two years, has received a call to the Simpson Methodist Church in Jersey City. He expects to close his labors in Bloomfield at the close of the conference year, on April 1 next. During his pastorate the church membership has been added to. Mr. Aylsworth was pastor of the DeGroot M. E. Church, Newark, before coming to Bloomfield. The matter of the call has been placed in the hands of the official board.

An entertainment under the auspices of William S. Pie son Camp, Sons of Veterans, will be held in the Post room next Tuesday night, for the benefit of the family of the late William Ingold, a widow, and five children survive him. Excellent talent has been engaged for the occasion.

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